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Stay safe this Easter: Avoid the fatal 5

If you're hitting the roads this Easter, beware of the 'fatal 5'. In 2019, 162 people died on the roads during the Easter weekend alone, and distractions, drunk driving, speeding, reckless driving and jaywalking accounted for most of those deaths.

Research suggests that human error accounts for 8 out of every 10 road accidents in South Africa. So, if you're travelling long distances this weekend, make sure you follow these simple safety tips to ensure your safe arrival and return home, says Wynand van Vuuren, partner of client experience at insurer King Price.

Get your vehicle ready
Check your tyres, top up your fluids and do some general maintenance to make sure your car is ready for a long trip. "Poorly maintained cars raise the risks of accidents significantly. Rather be safe than sorry," says Van Vuuren.

Avoid distractions
Don't text and drive. No, not even a quick text to tell your family your progress. It's estimated that texting while driving increases your chances of an accident 23 times. If you have to use your phone, wait for a stop. And make sure everyone in the car understands the importance of not distracting the driver.

Don't drive tired
Fatigue is a major contributor to accidents on our roads. "Get enough sleep the night before. If you find yourself yawning while driving, pull over and take a break. If you're travelling with somebody else, take turns behind the wheel," says Van Vuuren.

Drive defensively
Watch out for other drivers and people next to the road. The AA estimates a third of all road fatalities to be pedestrians. "Stay focused, and be alert to road conditions and other road users' and pedestrians' unpredictable behaviour," says Van Vuuren.

Make sure your insurance is up to date
Before you leave, check your car insurance cover to ensure that you have third party insurance and comprehensive cover. Also, check whether your policy offers roadside assistance, in case anything happen along the way. King Price clients can have the additional back-up of code red, which allows you to call for armed response help if you feel threatened, or have an emergency.

"Buckle up. Don't drink and drive. And stay alert. It's a jungle out there," says Van Vuuren.

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